Sociology of leisure or leisure sociology is the study of how humans organize their free time. Leisure includes a broad array of activities, such as sport, tourism, and the playing of games. The sociology of leisure is closely tied to the sociology of work, as each explores a different side of the work-leisure relationship. More recent studies in the field move away from this relationship, however, and focus on the relation between leisure and culture. Whenever this book mentions the sociology of leisure, you can take it to mean the sociology of leisure, sports, tourism, events, festivals, popular culture, hospitality, the internet and beyond. This introduction is the most important chapter of the whole book, so well done for starting here.

Chapter 8 begins with my own leisure research. I discuss my work on rugby league to explain the importance and usefulness of concepts such as the imagined community, nationalism, the symbolic and imaginary, invented traditions and insider myths, belonging and exclusion, and symbolic boundaries. Each of these concepts will be traced back to wider debates in sociology and anthropology about the meaning and discourse of community and nationalism. Researchers, including student researchers, are responsible for correctly citing existing sources they use in a study or that inform their work. While it is fine to build on previously published material (as long as it enhances a unique viewpoint), it must be referenced properly and never plagiarized.

Not all surveys would be considered sociological research. Marketing polls help companies refine marketing goals and strategies; they are generally not conducted as part of a scientific study, meaning they are not designed to test a hypothesis or to contribute knowledge to the field of sociology. The results are not published in a refereed scholarly journal, where design, methodology, results, and analyses are vetted.